

LECTURE,

Upon *Matthew* xvi. from
Verse 21st to the End of
the Chapter, preached at
Gardeners-Hall, near Edin-
burgh, May 5. 1739. *693. d. 10*

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A LECTURE,

*Upon Matthew xvi. from Verse 21st
to the End of the Chapter.*

My Friends,

IN the Beginning of this Chapter, we have an Account of a Discourse between our Lord and the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* about a Sign. These two Sorts of Persons, tho' differing widely in their Principles and Interests, yet unite and combine in one Design against the Lord Jesus: And, indeed, it is no uncommon Thing in the World, to see Men of very different Interests and Practices, harmoniously conspiring to oppress and ruin the Church of Christ: Tho', in other Matters, they can pursue very different Interests, yet, in their Opposition to Christ, and the Cause of Truth and Religion, they unite their Hatred and Enmity. We find our blessed Lord here dismisses them with Shame and Confusion, and then proceeds to caution his Disciples against the corrupt Doctrines and pernicious Principles that were then vented, and met with an almost universal Applause. An Account of this is laid down from the Beginning of the Chapter to Verse 13th. Next, he proceeds to catechize his Disciples anent some fundamental and essential Articles of our holy Religion, that were controverted and opposed at that Time, particularly concerning the Glory and Divinity of his Person. When the Son of God appeared in our World, the carnal and blinded World had no other Opinion concerning him, but that he was a mere Man; and, because of the mean Appearance he made, no ways calculated for gratifying the carnal Notions they had entertained of the *Messiah*, looked upon him, not only to be

be a mere Man, but the worst of Men, yea, a Cheat and Impostor. Well, to confirm the Faith of his Disciples in the Glory and Divinity of his Person, he enquireth at them what Opinions they conceived of him. *Peter*, in name of the rest, makes an illustrious and bright Confession of his Faith upon this Occasion, while he says unto his Lord and Master, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* This was the Doctrine controverted and impugned in these Days; therefore it was necessary that the Disciples should be established in the Faith thereof, that so they might be the better capacitated for declaring it to the Nations. Our Lord approves this Answer, and, on this Account, pronounceth him blessed; *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: For Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.* This is narrated from the 13th Verse to the 20th. Next, our Lord proceeds to forwarn them of a suffering Lot arising from Satan and the World, which he ushers in with a Prediction of the sad and sore Sufferings he was to undergo at *Jerusalem*, from the Hands of the civil and ecclesiastical Rulers. Now, from this Context we may learn this necessary and important Lesson, that Persons who are unacquainted with the Glory and Divinity of the Person of Christ, with the Glory of the two Natures in his Person, and the Excellency of his mediatorial Offices, are very unfit for meeting with Storms of Trial or Trouble. The first Storm that blows on them will very probably blow them away from Christ; their following of Christ will signify nothing at all; He cannot be a true Disciple, who is unacquainted with Christ, be his Profession what it will. But, if once a Person receive the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Christ, be acquainted with his Grace and Righteousness, with his Offices and Relations, and can say, *my Lord, and my God*, a Thousand Difficulties in his Way to Heaven will never be able to turn him back.

back. O Sirs, cultivate the saving Knowledge of Jesus Christ; seek after Acquaintance with him in his Person and Offices, and then you shall be preserved in him, kept from a total Backsliding from him.

But we shall proceed to explain the Verses read, as they ly in Order.

Verse 21. *From that Time forth began Jesus to shew unto his Disciples, how that he must go up to Jerusalem, and suffer many Things of the Elders, and chief Priests, and Scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third Day.*

Our Lord Jesus having in some former Verses told them some of the massy Points of Religion, the Knowledge of which is connected with Salvation, proceeds in this Verse to inform them of that terrible Trial that he himself was to undergo, when he was to be condemned to Death, and suffer as a Malefactor at *Jerusalem*. He shews them that he must go up to *Jerusalem*. Why so? There was a Necessity for it; for he had promised from Eternity to pay the Debt of an elect World, and the Place of Payment was *Jerusalem*, the Place of meeting with their inexorable Pursuer was Mount *Calvary*, a Place hard by *Jerusalem*. Of Necessity he must go up to *Jerusalem*, for he had promised to do so, and his Promise he cannot break, otherwise he should deny himself, which is not to be supposed. The elect Company that were given to him of the Father behoved to be ransomed; and, if he had not gone up to *Jerusalem*, the Ransom could not have been paid, for this was the Place pitched upon, where this glorious Event was to take Place. He appeared in the End of the World, saith the Apostle, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, Heb. xi. 26. Law and Justice, Sirs, cried solemnly upon our Lord Jesus Christ to go up to *Jerusalem*; he got a Summons from them to pay the Elect's Debt, and it was not possible he could sit the Summons, or retract his Word and Promise.

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He shews them that he must go up to *Jerusalem*. Well, what was his Errand there? A very weighty Errand indeed; it was to die and suffer there. We, who were exposed unto eternal Death and Sufferings, could escape no otherways than by his Suffering in our Name and Room. He must go up to *Jerusalem*, and suffer: But what? Many Things. He was to undergo a Variety of Sufferings. He suffered at the Hands of Men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*; they all combined against him; he suffered from Hell, and all its black Band of Devils; they all, as it were, surrounded him on Mount *Calvary*: But his greatest Sufferings were by the Hand of God; hence was he made to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* He suffered by all Creatures: The Angels were not allowed to help our suffering Head; not one Angel durst peep out of Heaven with a Word of Comfort to him when upon the tormenting Cross. The very Fountains of Water were locked up from him, when in this Condition; not a Sip of Water must be given to our thirsty Sufferer. He cried out on the Cross, *I thirst*. Yet nothing is allowed him but Vinegar and Gall. *He must suffer many Things*. Who were the Instruments, may ye say, employed by sovereign Providence in this Case? Who were the Tools by whom Christ suffered? Strange! There are none made Mention of but Men, but a Set of Men that ye would think should not have been in the Roll; the Elders, chief Priests and Scribes. O unhallowed Tools, employed in the most fatal and bloody Tragedy that was ever acted under the Cope of Heaven. This is a Providence that is very dark and deep, that Men that should countenance and befriend Christ, his Truths and Cause, should turn mortal and inveterate Enemies. But there is nothing more ordinary in the World, than to see Men, who would fain set up for high Attainments, persecute the Followers of the Lamb, and pour Contempt on the Truths of Christ. *And be killed*. Nothing would satisfy

satisfy these Men thirsting after Blood, but the Blood of the incarnate Son of God, and indeed they got their Thirst slacked at length. *And be killed.* No sooner did the holy and innocent Lamb of God enter into our World, but *Herod*, that bloody and devouring Wolf, sought him to kill him, and obliged him, with his Mother and supposed Father *Joseph*, to flee unto *Egypt* for Shelter and Protection. *And be killed.* Here the New Testament Sacrifice is just upon the Point of being offered up; and had he not been so, you had never had a comfortable Night's Quarters on God's Earth; Fire and Brimstone was the best we could have well expected to Eternity. But, O wonderful! Here is a Lamb just upon the Point of being slain, to prevent all this; and he was to suffer most cheerfully, which is expressed by his going up to *Jerusalem*. The Lamb that was to be the Life of his Followers is just going to be offered up; *he must go up to Jerusalem, and be killed.* How willingly did he go to accomplish this Business! Oh! It is a strange Expression, *And be killed.* What! The Prince of Life to lose his Life for the Sake of you and me! The very Glory of Heaven to ly like a dead Carcase on a Cross! O wonderful! This is Matter of Wonder at all Times, but especially on a Christian Sabbath. *And be killed.* No doubt his Enemies, that were as poor blind Men, abandoned of God, and picked out for accomplishing this unhallowed Business, had nothing else in View but the Satisfaction of their Wrath and Malice against him, and thought they would do God good Service by embreuing their Hands in his Blood. But the God of Glory, in this Matter, had a quite different View, *namely*, the eternal Redemption and Salvation of a Company of fallen *Adam's* Race. *And be killed.* Nothing would satisfy Justice but this Blood, the Place where the Life lies. Christ behoved to be killed. The Sword of Justice was flaming against a guilty World upon the Back of *Adam's* Fall.

Well,

Well, when Justice was going to give the Stroke; Christ steps in and says, Father, if you seek me, let these go their Way; O let poor *Adam's* Family alone, lay not a Stroke on them whom the Father has gifted unto me; I shall be thy Prisoner, that they may be liberate; I'll lose my Life to save their's; I'll perfume Heaven and Earth by the Saviour of my Sacrifice: And the Saviour of this Sacrifice goes up to Heaven, and Justice is well satisfied therewith; it ascends before the Throne, and will do so to Eternity. O Man, did you ever find the sweet-smelling Saviour of this Sacrifice! If you never found it, you are yet in your Sins, and shall perish, if Mercy help thee not. The Value of this Sacrifice was infinite, as being made by a Person who was God as well as Man, and the divine Nature stamped an infinite Value upon his temporary Sufferings. *And he killed.* O, say you, that is a strange Thought, to say our Lord is killed. Ay, but it is a ravishing and reviving Thought, it is one of the greatest Discoveries of Love and Grace that ever visited our World. He was killed. For what? Had he any Sin? He had no Sin of his own, neither inherent nor actual; he was only guilty in a legal Sense, our Sin and Guilt being legally transferred on and imputed to him: Just as the high Priest, under the *Jewish* Dispensation, confessed the Sins of the People, and transferred them on the Scape-Goat. Our Sins werelaid on Christ, *The Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all*, Isa. liii. 6. If it had not been so, Justice could not have been just in giving him one Stroke. But he bare our Sins; and, wherever Justice found Sin, there it belovied to give the Blow. Thus Christ was killed? But must he ly in the State of the Dead? No, he was raised the third Day; *And he raised again the third Day.* O Sirs, behold here the *Sun of Righteousness* setting in Blood, and rising the third Day out of the Grave with bright and shining Glory, ravishing all the Beholders,

holders, the Inhabitants of Heaven and Earth. Christ became Death's Prisoner for a Part of three Days: But Death was too weak to keep the Captain of Salvation in his Prison: Hence, saith the Apostle Peter, *God hath raised him up, having loosed the Pains of Death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it, Acts ii. 24.* It was not possible, Sirs, that our Lord Jesus Christ could be detained in Death's Bonds. These, like Samson, bound him Hand and Foot, but he brake them like Flax, and came forth. *And he raised the third Day.* *Jonah* was a Type of him; he lay three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly. Death, like the Whale, swallowed up our great *Jonah*, and carried him to his Grave: But it was not able to detain him a Moment longer than he pleased; it vomited out a greater than *Jonah*. But to proceed.

Verse 22d. *Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: This shall not be unto thee.*

For all the Instructions *Peter*, one of the chiefest of the Apostles, had lately got, yet, thro' carnal Love to his Master's Ease, he takes this Revelation very ill; he is very unwilling to hear of his Master's Departure from his Family. It is as if he had said, Alas! Master, if thou art taken away from us, what will become of us; *spare thyself*; or, as it is in the Original, have Pity on thyself: As strange a Rebuke as ever came out of the Mouth of a Creature to the eternal Son of God; we may conceive the Import of his Rebuke to be this, Master, spare thyself, and let all the Promises be sacrificed, and all the Prophecies fail; let the Father's Glory sink eternally, rather than these Things should happen; let the Souls of the Elect be lost for ever, rather than this should befall thee. *Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.* He was never rebuked for a Sin or Fault, and this was none either. These Words were undoubtedly spoken by *Peter* out of a good Intention, and

with a singular Affection to his Lord: But they speak him to have been as yet grossly ignorant of the Redemption of an elect World by the Satisfaction of Christ, of the Doctrine of the Cross, and of the Will of the Father concerning Christ. And they spake great Weakness in him, to contradict him whom he had but just now acknowledged to be the Christ, the Son of God. Good Intentions and good Affections will by no Means justify evil Actions. From this Conduct of *Peter* we may learn this Lesson, that we are not to follow an ill Cause, or do an ill Action, for the Goodness of a Man who may be concerned in it. It is now a common Byword amongst a Set of coldrife and fresh-water Professors, We will not own the Testimony, because such and such good Men are against it; they do not see it to be their Duty to leave the corrupt Church, and testify against her; and, when such good Men are thus minded, should we not follow them? This is just such a Practice as that of the *Israelites* that worshiped *Aaron's* Calf, because he was a Saint? It is like they would say Amen to *Peter's* Advice, because he was a good Man. Alas! Sirs, good Men are not our Bible; we are to follow the Bible, and that is the Rule of our Duty. My Friends, if we were to follow good Men in all their Actings and Managements, we should fall into many hurtful Snares. It is evident from Scripture that good Men have been guilty of very bad Things, and are by no Means Examples set up for us to imitate: Follow the revealed Will of God, adhere unto what it points out as Duty, and do not follow the Example of this and the other good Man, for we know not who are good; we are only to follow Christ, and other Men no farther than they follow him. If *Peter* had considered his Bible better, he had not been so far imposed upon by Satan, as to give the Lord Jesus such hellish Advice, *Be it far from thee, Lord: This shall not be unto thee.* If this had been far from Christ,

Christ, we had been set at an eternal Distance from God, and should never have had any Interest in, or Communion with him. All that can be said to excuse him was his great Ignorance, and the Influence Satan was permitted to have over him. And we find, in the next Verse, that Christ takes him up sharply, and gives him a smart and alarming Rebuke.

Verse 23d. *But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an Offence unto me. For thou savourest not the Things that be of God, but those that be of Men.*

This is as if our Lord had said, *Peter*, I find Satan is making Use of thy Tongue to marr the most beautiful and glorious Work that ever was proposed or designed. He says not, *Get thee behind me, Peter*; but, *Get thee behind me, Satan*. This Advice of *Peter's*, had it been taken, would have ruined our World; we had been Slaves to the Devil, and Objects upon which divine Wrath would have preyed for ever. But with Indignation and holy Zeal does the Lord Jesus rebuke him for his rash and ill-advised Counsel. This Rebuke given to *Peter* argued our Lord's Earnestness upon the Work of Redemption, and we find no where in Scripture, Words expressing such an high and holy Indignation, proceeding out of the Mouth of Christ. Why, his Heart was intent upon the Work, and no Wonder than he give *Peter* a sharp and confounding Reprimand, for setting himself to obstruct it. He was now in his Way to *Jerusalem*, to finish the Work which his Father gave him to do; and *Peter*, under satanical Influence, endeavours to hinder him, saying, *Master, do not go there; never set thy Face towards Jerusalem; stay back from a Place where thou sayst thou art to be killed and put to Death*. Well, *but Jesus turned, &c.* He turned about in Haste, as expressing his Displeasure with his World-ruining Counsel. He saw *Peter* like to be ruined by Satan; he saw a Heart-
Plague,

Plague, like a Leprosy, breaking out, and he cures it by a sharp and severe Reprimand: If this Rebuke had been tendred unto *Peter* allendarly, he had died under the gravaminous Weight thereof: But it was Satan that the Reproof chiefly hit. He saw Satan, that cruel and pernicious Adversary, just snatching one of his Lambs at his Back, and therefore he conjures the Devil to be gone: O Sirs, Satan's Hand, like *Ishmael's*, is against every one of Christ's Disciples, and he vigorously strives to get them away from him, that he may defeat their Salvation. O that all Men were against him! Our Lord here adds, *Thou art an Offence unto me*; thou grieveest my Spirit, thou raisest my Indignation; I am highly displeased with thee for throwing such an Obstacle in my Way. *For thou savourest not the Things that be of God, but those that be of Men.* It is as if he had said, a worse Counsel thou couldst never have given me, *Peter*; *Scribes* and *Pharisees* could never have advised me worse. This Advice of thine is not of God, but springs from Hell; for Satan is making Use of thy Tongue for marring the Salvation of Sinners: Thy Counsel in this Matter is not according to my Father's Will and Design, relating to his Glory in the Redemption and Salvation of lost Sinners; but is earthly, selfish, devilish. *Peter*, Sirs, here spake like a Man in black Nature, and not like a Believer. A little before, he spake like a Believer, when he made a glorious and noble Confession of his Faith, but here he speaks as if he had never known any Thing of the Grace of God, when opposing God's Glory and the Salvation of Men, under a Shew of mighty Respect for his Lord. O Sirs, what Need had we to be upon our Watch against the infernal Fiend, and against the Deceitfulness and Unbelief of our own Hearts, lest we be puffed up with Pride, grow impatient of humbling Prospects, oppose the Wisdom and Will of Christ, and bring ourselves under the Fury of his awful Rebukes. This Advice of *Peter's* gives Occasion to
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our Lord Jesus to speak of the Cross, as if he had said, *Peter*, does the Cross affright you? Came I to the World only, in your Opinion, to wear the Crown? No; mistake it not. Nor only must I, your Lord and Master, bear a heavy Cross, with all the Curses of a broken Law laid on it, but you, and your Fellow-Disciples, must bear your little Crosses also.

Verse 24. *Then said Jesus unto his Disciples, if any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.*

As if he had said, *Peter*, you and my other Disciples must be reconciled unto, and lay your Account with Crosses, Losses, Hardships, and Difficulties not a few.

Here, Sirs, we have a Duty incumbent upon all the Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is, *To deny themselves, take up their Cross and follow him.* It is laid on them as a Duty, but is promised them as a Grace. We must deny ourselves. Self is a Complication of all Evils, a Nest of all Corruptions; it is the Devil's Temple, stuffed with all the Evils of Hell. You must deny Self; this *Dagon* must be brought down. Some, indeed, in our Day, are for exalting Self to an equal Height with the Glory of God; they would have us *sacrifice to our own Net, and burn Incense to our own Drag*, while they contend that Self-Love is to be the chief Motive, Principle and Standard of our Actions: But what is this but flagrant Idolatry, dishonourable to God, and pernicious to the Souls of Men? In Opposition to this abominable Doctrine, our Lord Jesus recommends Self-Denial unto all his Followers. Self-Denial is a necessary and essential Qualification for Cross-bearing. If Self have the Ascendent in your Hearts, you will never bear the Cross for Christ. Self, Sirs, must be pulled down, and mortified, and then the heaviest Crosses will be tolerable and easy; they will be born with Ease and Pleasure. You see, in *Acts v.* what a Cross

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our Lord's Disciples met with, while they were put in Prisons and beaten with Stripes, yet you see, in Verse 41. what Joy they had amidst it, *And they departed from the Presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name.* If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, &c. You must take up the Cross of Christ, Sirs. All that expect to wear a Crown of unfading Glory, must take up the Cross first. All the crowned Heads in the Land of Glory were all Cross-Bearers, some of them less, some of them more. Here you see a Necessity of taking up the Cross: And it is Matter of no small Encouragement to us, to consider that it is of our Lord's Shaping and Framing: Were it left to Satan's or the World's Shaping, there would not be a Cross-Bearer but what would be crushed under the ponderous Weight thereof. *Let him take up his Cross;* he must call it his Cross, claim Property in it, and must bring down his Heart to it; he must be reconciled to it. The Believer must embrace whatever Cross holy Providence sees meet to lay on him, as his Crown, and must bear it with Joy, without Reluctance or Rising of the Spirit. We find that *Moses preferred a Cross to a Crown; He chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season.* He made a very foolish Choice in the View of a blind and carnal World; it was made a Reproach to own the People of God, that were treated as poor Slaves in *Egypt*, and exposed to all the Rigours of Tyranny and Slavery: But he chose this rather than to be the Heir of the Crown of *Egypt*: He made Choice of Affliction; he saw more Glory in Christ's Cross, and in being exposed to Shame for his Name's Sake, than in all the Diamonds that beautified the *Egyptian* Crown. O Sirs, they that pour Shame and Reproach upon you for the Sake of Christ, they bespangle you with the Pearls and Diamonds of Christ's Crown. All the Diamonds and Pearls that
ever

ever the Earth produced are noways preferable
 unto the least Reproach that you suffer for the
 Name and Cause of Christ: They do all *work for*
you a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory;
 every Reproach shall add to the Lustre of thy
 Crown; if thy Reproach be for Christ, or the very
 least of his Truths (if they may be so called) it will
 be a Jewel in that bright Crown that shall incircle
 thy Head in the Regions of Glory. *Let him take*
up his Cross and follow me. The Cross must terrify
 and scare none from Christ; no, it must engage
 them to follow him: Christ must have Followers.
 And, O what a Retinue has this great and glo-
 rious Monarch! All the holy Angels, and all the
 poor weeping Cross-Bearers, are his Attendants
 and Followers. Crosses and Afflictions are the
 ordinary Lot of Believers while in this Wilderness;
 but, ere long, Matters will be altered and changed
 to the Advantage; they shall all at last come to shine
 in bright Glory. Christ in Heaven has many
 Crowns on his Head, and he is adorned with a
 Crown to crown and beautify thee; as he swam to
 his Crown thro' a Sea of Crosses and Troubles, so
 you shall at last emerge out of the Sea of your
 Crosses, and receive from him a Crown of Glory
 that fadeth not away. O if you had but a Sight
 of his ravishing Glory, all the Crosses ever you met
 with will never drive you away from Christ; you
 will follow him, tho' a red Sea and black *Jordan*
 were in the Way; you must go after him, for he
 is altogether lovely. The Sight of the Loveliness
 and Beauty of Christ so influences the Believer, that
 he is content to suffer any Thing for him. What
 is the Matter, says the Believer, tho' I be exposed
 to, and meet with Shame and Reproach in the
 World? I see a Beauty and Glory in it all. Every
 Reproach is a Pearl added to my Crown; all the
 Harm my Enemies do me, by loading me with
 Reproaches, is just a Brightning of my Crown,
 and besetting it with more lucid Jewels. And
 there-

therefore I cannot, I dare not shift the Cross, be what it will; I love my Lord, and I love him for cutting out Crosses for me. This, Sirs, is a noble Piece of Self-Denial. If a Man saw the Glory, the ravishing Glory and matchless Excellency of the Prince of the Things of the Earth, he would be transported with Raptures of Love to him, and would be ashamed to go to Heaven without doing something for him; he would be satisfied, like *Paul*, to be exposed to Perils of all Sorts for him. To engage you to a Liking unto the Cross, consider that your glorious Head was exposed to greater and more grievous Perils for you than you can bear for him. He bore the Curse of the Law, and the Wrath of God for you; but your Crosses are easy and pleasant, there being no Wrath in them, and, besides, the Lord bears you Company. Did you never bear the Cross, Sirs? Did you never suffer a Frown for your Adherence unto Christ? Did you never any Service for Christ? Then, I am sure, if you are Believers, you will be some Way ashamed to enter Heaven in this Condition. The Man that never did any Service for Christ will be ashamed to enter Heaven, and will be apt to say, All my Service was for myself, my Wife, my Children, &c. O Sirs, did you ever offer your Service for Christ? Were you ever content to bear the Cross? Then be comforted; for thou art exposed to the Cross, that thou mayst be conformed to thy Head, who *endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, and is now set down on the Right-Hand of the Throne of God*. No Believer ever bore so many Crosses as Christ, and sure ye need not grumble to suffer a little Reproach for him. O Sirs, be self-denied Cross-Bearers for Christ, and bear your Crosses with a joyful Heart and cheerful Countenance before the World, to recommend Christ, his Religion and Way unto them. *And follow me*. The worst ill thou meetest with, O Believer, will, instead of hindering thy Sanctification, greatly promote it. O follow

Follow him, fearing no Cross; go on, Believer, and
 you will follow the Lamb thro' the shining Regi-
 ons of Glory. There are many Things indeed that
 are apt to turn the Believer aside, many crooked
 Paths and By-Roads; but go on, Believer, and
 follow Christ. Bear the Cross and follow him,
 and he will put a radiant Crown of Glory upon
 thy Head. O what a ravishing Sight will it be to
 see all the ransomed Race, the Nation of them
 that are saved, shining with glorious Crowns upon
 their Heads, all, like the Children of a King,
 decked with Jewels, and bright Raiment! Oh!
 May not the Thought of this excite you all to fol-
 low Christ. And may it not fill you, O Believer,
 with Wonder, that he singles out you from the
 World to bear his Cross, that he may set thee on
 a Throne, and put a Crown upon thee at last. *And*
follow me. Our Lord, Sirs, will still have Fol-
 lowers, tho' all *Scotland* should turn their Backs
 upon him; he will have a Set of Witnesses and Fol-
 lowers, tho' *Britain* and *Ireland* should cast him off.
 It is easy for him to make you willing in a Day of
 his Power, and then you shall be made to follow
 him. You that are following Satan, your Lusts
 and Idols, he can soon touch your Hearts, and
 make you follow him. You know when the Pro-
 phet cast his Mantle on *Elisha*, he fell to follow him.
 Well, if our great Prophet Christ, cast the Mantle
 of his Righteousness upon you, you will run after
 him, stay back who will; you will defy all
 Temptations and Corruptions, and tell them, that,
 in spite of them, you will run after Christ. Thus,
 Sirs, you see, that whosoever is heartily willing
 and resolved to be Christ's Disciple, must deny
 himself his own Wit, Will, Profit and Pleasure;
 must submit unto, and acquiesce in all the Hard-
 ships and Crosses he may meet with; and must
 follow Christ, imitate him in all his imitable Per-
 fections, and yield Obedience unto his Command-
 ments.

Verse 25. *For whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it: And whosoever will lose his Life for my Sake, shall find it.*

Here is an Argument and Reason to engage us unto the Duties recommended in the former Verse. It is as if he had said, fear not the Loss of your Life; for that is the Way to gain it. *Sirs, whatever you lose in Christ's Service, it is all Gain.* If any Person lose any Thing for Christ, he has promised to make it up an hundred Fold to you. Now, will you take your Neighbour's Bond for Security, and yet not take Christ's Word. O horrid Sin! Well, if you won't take Christ's Word, all the Angels in Heaven, and crowned Heads on the Earth cannot give you so good a Bond. *For whosoever will save his Life shall lose it.* By Life here, we are to understand not only natural Life, but all the Means of Life, all worldly Gear, Houses, Lands, all temporal Accommodations, all Things pertaining to this Life. If you lose all these for Christ, you are great Gainers: And I'll tell you more, whenever Christ comes to your House in Providence, and says, I desire a Loan of this or that for my Glory, in this he is honouring you. And this is he doing at this Day. If a Prince or crowned Head came to thy House, and desired a Loan of this and the other Trifle, you would reckon it a great Honour done you. Well, here the King of Glory comes to you, and says, Give me thy Name and Reputation, that the Wicked may trample upon it; O Believer, say, Welcome, Lord, unto it: When the Lord says, Give me thy Life for my Cause; answer, Lord take it: And think God is doing you a very great Honour, when he is making these Demands upon you. Be ready to part with whatever the Lord calls for at your Hands. *For whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it.* That is, he that thinks to preserve himself from temporal Death, by sinful and sneaking Compliance and forsaking me, shall miss his Mark, and fall short of
eternal

eternal Life, and be plunged into endless Misery, *And whosoever will lose his Life, for my Sake, shall find it.* Many a Life has gone for Christ's Sake: But there were never so many Lives taken in the World as he deserves. O what ails the World at Christ, and the Way of Religion? If you say as they say, and do as they do, they will never touch you: But, if you once espouse the Cause and Quarrel of Christ according to his own Word, you will be hated of all Men. This our Lord foretold unto his Disciples, *Ye shall be hated of all Men for my Name's Sake.* It is not for their own Name's Sake, but his Name's Sake that they are hated. The Ground of the World's Quarrel against the Followers of the Lord Jesus, is surely on Account of himself, however otherways they may colour it. Blessed art thou, O Believer, that ever thou wast born to be hated and lose thy Life for Christ's Name's Sake. Thou art a Man greatly beloved. What the Angel said to *Daniel*, he says unto thee, *O Man greatly beloved.* Thou art hated and persecuted by a few Mortals, that have their Foundation in the Dust, and whose awful Doom fast approaches: But thou art highly favoured in the Court of Heaven, Christ himself, and all his Saints and Angels love thee, and that is more than sufficient to counterballance the World's Hatred and Spleen against you. Thus he that suffers a temporal Death on Account of his Faith in Christ, and Obedience to him, or because he will not make Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, shall not be hurt of the second Death, but obtain everlasting Life, which is the Life of the Soul, and is best of all.

Verse 26. *For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul.*

What is a Man profited if he should gain the whole World by denying Christ? It is a poor empty Gain; nay, a dreadful, an inconceivable Loss. Yea, tho' he should gain ten Thousand Worlds

Worlds by relinquishing Christ, and deserting his Truths, he would just gain ten Thousand Vanities and Vexations of Spirit; tho' you had a Million of Worlds, you would have but a Million of Plagues and Curses. It is a Truth, Sirs, and will stand a Truth to Eternity, that hate Christ who will, they'll never get good by it. What is his Gain? There is no Gain, but a great Loss, a Soul-Loss, an irreparable Loss. O amazing Loss! You had better lose all that can be named than lose your Souls, that are of far greater Value than the whole World. If you once lose your Soul, you lose all; for you can never redeem it again; you can never compensate the Loss. *The Redemption of the Soul is precious, and ceases for ever.* That is, it ceases to be redeemed by any Man or Angel, for any created Redeemer it would cease for evermore. If Christ himself had not put Hand to it. Well then thy Soul is a lost Soul, if thou forsake and abandon Christ, and where's all your Gain? Oh! It is strange to see Men so much taken up with the World, and the Vanities of Time, as to set no Value upon their Souls at all: They are so drenched in worldly Pleasures, so immersed in the Pursuit of secular Interests, that they care no more for their Souls, than the Dirt of the Streets: Their Case is truly lamentable: For all the Trash of the Earth they are so fast amassing, shall leave them, and their Souls they will lose, and will have a long Eternity to lament the Loss. You that prefer the World to your Souls, you make a very foolish Exchange, as ever poor Creatures did: What! To lose your Souls for a little of the Dunghill of the World, Is it not an inconceivable Loss? O Fool, what knowest thou but this Night thy Soul may be required of thee. How does a Man lose his Soul may ye say? His Soul does not leave him, it does not perish as to its Being or Existence, but he loses the Peace, the Welfare and Happiness of his Soul; his Soul is miserable to all Eternity. O matchless amazing

amazing Loss! Or what can
for his Soul? There's no R.
be made. What can he
of his Soul, who has thrown
gilded Clay. O foolish Man! O
can you give in Exchange for your Soul, no
you were Master of all the World, yet th^y could
avail you nothing. Thus we see that a Man cannot be
profited, tho' he gained the whole World, with all
the Things that are desireable in it, and lose his
Soul; that he can give nothing for its Redempti-
on, when lost.

Verse 27. *For the Son of Man shall come in the
Glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he
shall reward every Man according to his Works.*

How comes this in, may ye say? It comes in
very seasonably: It is as if he had said, *Peter*, and
you my other Followers, be not scared or offended
at my Cross, at my present humbled and afflicted
Circumstances, that I was speaking of to you: For
ere long ye will see me all shining in glorious Robes,
and coming to judge the World; then I your
Lord and Master who am now mocked and re-
proached, and shall, when I go up to *Jerusalem*,
be crucified on a cursed Tree, as a vile Slave and
a criminal Malefactor, be divested of all the ex-
ternal Marks of Disgrace, the Reproach of my low
and abased Condition shall then be wiped off, and
you shall appear with me in Glory; and I will
reward every Man according to his Works. Thus,
Sirs, the glorious *Messiah*, who, as the Son of Man,
did once appear in the Fashion of a Man, attend-
ed with all the mean Circumstances and sinless In-
firmities of human Nature, in its humbled State,
shall, in the Day of Judgment, appear, as the Son
of God, in the Form of God, shining in the Glory
of the same divine Nature with his Father, and at-
tended with a grand and splendid Retinue of holy
Angels: And then he, as a Judge of the whole
World, will pass Sentence of eternal Life upon the
R^everend,

Righteous, and of Death upon the Wicked, according as their Works shall evidence them to be such. You'll say, it is not said here, that he will be rewarded for their Works, but according to their Works. We know a Tree by the Fruit. So, with Reference unto the Righteous and Wicked, the Works of their Lives, shall be Evidences of their internal State. This Reward, with Reference unto the Wicked, is a Reward of Debt; for Death is as due to the Sinner, as Wages are unto a Workman; the Wicked justly deserve Death, and they shall surely get it. But, with Reference unto the Righteous, the Reward is of Grace. All the good Works of the Saints shall be brought above Board at the Day of Judgment, and produced as so many Evidences of their gracious Estate. If thou, poor Soul, be testifying for Christ, and fighting against the Devil's Kingdom and Interest in the World, in a Way of Faith; and tho' the Devil and his Auxiliaries fight against thy Witnesing-Work; yet it shall be produced at the Day of Judgment, and thou shalt get a Reward, not a Reward of Debt, but a Reward of Grace; a Reward resulting from the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Verse 28. *Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of Death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.*

As if our Lord had said, I'll tell you of another Argument to fortify and comfort your Souls under a heavy and troublesome Lot in the World. I have a Piece of good News to inform you of: Ere it be long I'll entertain you with a Glimpse of my Glory on Mount *Tabor*; there you shall be admitted to view my Glory thro' the Vail of my Humanity, and you shall not taste of Death, till this Grand Event take Place, this glorious Privilege be conferred upon you. There were only three honoured with this matchless Sight, *namely, Peter, James and John*. But this Coming of the Son of Man in his Kingdom, certainly extends further than his Transfiguration

figuration on Mount *Tabor* must extend unto his coming to set up his *Kingdom*, with great Power and Glory in the *salvation* of *Spirit*, in the wonderful Increase of the Gospel Church, in the Subversion of the *mosaick* Frame of Worship; and in the Destruction of the City, Temple and Nation of the *Jews*, for their Obstinacy and Unbelief. By his Coming here is plainly meant; that he would come after his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, in the Power and Efficacy of his Grace, displayed in a Gospel Dispensation, in bringing Thousands out of Satan's Dominions, and making them Subjects of the Kingdom of Grace; this coming is to erect the Gospel Church, unhinge the *Jewish* Oeconomy, and assemble the Nations unto his displayed Standard. The Coming of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is a very heartsome and agreeable Sight: And O that it may be the Blessing of *Scotland* to see Christ coming with convincing and converting Power in his own Ordinances, bringing in true hearty Subjects to himself. This is a Display of Power greater than that on Mount *Tabor*. And this cannot be meant of his Glory at the Day of Judgment; for they were to see this before they tasted of Death, they were to see many Thousand Souls added unto the Gospel Church. Oh! What a glorious Display of the Power and Grace of Christ is the Conversion of Sinners unto him.

Now, *My Friends*, that I may conclude, it is your Duty and mine to be Followers of Christ, to follow him as well in the Days of Adversity, as of Prosperity. Follow whom you will, you'll never get such a glorious Master, that is able to relieve and support you under all your Pressures and Hardships. You need not be afraid of the Cross; cast your Crosses on Christ and he shall sustain you; cast both yourselves and your Crosses on him, and he will bear you up. The Cross is more terrible at a Distance, than when you are near it. If you be honoured with a Prison, that Prison will be changed into a Palace.

Palace. Who the Disciples of Christ are
 burdened with Crosses, he says, Cast your
 Burdens upon me: Just like a Father when he sees
 his Child fainting under any Load or Difficulty, he
 runs to him and takes it off. Well, Sirs, Christ is
 a Father to his People, and says concerning all their
 Crosses, *Half mine.* There cannot be any Load on
 thy Back, but his infinite Strength can and will bear
 it. Oh! Then follow the Lord, and cast all your
 Burdens upon him, and he will sustain you. O Be-
 liever in Christ, art thou bearing a personal Cross, a
 Family-Cross, or a Cross in thy Relations? These
 are very touching Crosses, that go to the quick.
 Well, bring all these Crosses unto your Lord, who
 is the Burden-Bearer, and he will sustain you. Be-
 ware of putting him out of his Office: If thou com-
 mit not thyself unto him, and lay all thy Crosses on
 him that he may bear them, it will fare very
 ill with thee. Therefore, my Friends, whatever
 Crosses in the Courses of sovereign Providence are
 laid on you, bring them all to Christ, and you shall
 be preserved from all fainting and sinking Fits.
 And, in a very little Time, thy Warfare shall be
 accomplished, thy Crosses shall be removed, thy
 Troubles shall be ended; and thou shalt be waisted
 to the Mansions of Rest and Glory in the heavenly
 Mount Zion, where Peace and Joy, Tranquillity and
 Ease shall be thy Privilege for ever. O long and
 pant for the Dawning of the happy Day, when
 thou shalt enter into the undisturbed and peaceful
 Rest of Glory. *May the Lord bless his Word.*
Amen.

F I N I S.